Fire in ONGC's exploratory oil well at Kadi

864. SHRI RAM NARESH KUSHAWAHA:
SHRI SUSHIL CHAND MOHUNTA:
SHRI M. KADHARSHA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fire occurred in the ONGC's exploratory oil well-53 at Kadi in Mehsana (Gujarat) in December, 1985;

(b) if so, what were the causes of the fire;

(c) what steps were taken to contain and extinguish the fire;

(d) what amount of damage was suffered as a result thereof;

(e) whether any inquiry as been conducted in this regard; if so, what are the results thereof;

(f) what action has been taken by Government in the matter so as to avoid such incidents in future; and

(g) whether the ONGC is equipped to put off such fire, if not what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An inquiry has been ordered by ONGC to establish the cause of fire.

(c) ONGC immediately mobilised their fire fighting teams and equipment; assistance of State Government; Government Corporations, Soviet experts and the army was obtained.

(d) According to a preliminary estimate the loss is estimated to be Rs. 1.8 crores

(e) Yes, Sir. The results would be known when the enquiry is over.

(f) The steps taken by ONGC include providing more dependable equipment for safety and fire fighting; suitable training of ONGC personnel; observance of safety procedures as laid in the safety manuals.

(g) The ONGC is equipped to combat normal oil well fires. Sometimes help of other agencies has also to be taken.

Price rise of Coal

866. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently raised the prices of coal, if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is a fact that the prices of coal have been raised due to the imposition of some conditions by the World Bank for giving assistance for certain new projects; if so, what are the reasons for accepting the conditions imposed by the World Bank; and

(c) what is the likely impact of the rise in the prices of coal on the consumer as well as on the price index?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) The price of coal fixed w.e.f. 8.1.1984 after considering the recommendations of Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices was due for revision w.e.f. 1-4-1985. Since then, there has been substantial increase in the cost of production due to various factors such as escalation in the cost of inputs like stores, explosives, timber etc., increase in wages due to increase in the rate of Industrial D.A., raise in the limit of bonus|exgratia payment to the employees, increase in underground allowance etc., increase in price of petrol, oil and lubricant (POL), increase in the Railway freight|fare, higher incidence of depreciation and interest charges etc. On account of enhanced cost